THE WISDOM OF SOLOMON?

OR

THE POLITICS OF PRAGMATISM:

THE GENERAL CONFERENCE ABORTION DECISION 1970-71

by

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ABSTRACT

Early Adventism published positions in harmony with the Physicians' Crusade Against Abortion, 1850-1890, though it was not active in that movement. The church produced its first set of abortion guidelines in 1970, when American attitudes toward abortion had changed and some of the church's hospitals were experiencing growing pressure from their surrounding communities to provide abortion services.

Less than a year after the first set of abortion guidelines were developed, the church revised and expanded them. The resulting liberalized guidelines have allowed Adventist hospitals a great deal of freedom in their abortion practices, a freedom that has resulted in a large number of abortions being performed. Although the church has been hesitant to let it be known, at the present it is clearly not, in either policy or practice, limiting its medical institutions to therapeutic abortions.

Therefore each of you must put off falsehood
and speak truthfully to his neighbor,
for we are all members of one body.

Ephesians 4:25

"With malice toward none
with charity for all . . .
to speak the truth
in love."

My questions about abortion and the Seventh-day Adventist Church began on a cold day in January 1985.[1] A "chance" encounter with a pastor while searching for parking at the Smithsonian Museum in Washington, DC had led to an invitation to worship with his church sometime. The following Sunday, I decided to drop in and hear him preach. I arrived late and sat in the back, unnoticed, and ungreeted. He stood to preach and announced to the congregation that this was "Sanctity of Life" Sunday. After spending some time on the Biblical basis for the sanctity of life position, he told the following story:

> During my wife's pregnancy with our son, Seth, we decided to look for a Christian doctor who shared our sanctity of life convictions. So we drove to Takoma Park, Maryland to the office of Dr. _____ __, a Seventh-day Adventist. Following the test and examination which confirmed that she was pregnant, the very first question she was asked was 'do you want this baby or do you want an abortion?' We looked at each other in shock and disbelief. We then turned and said, 'We are sorry. We must be in the wrong place.' We got up and left.[2]

At the close of his sermon he invited questions and comments from the congregation. One lady stood and asked, "Are you sure that what you said about the Seventh-day Adventists is true? I always thought that they were Bible-believing Christians." He answered, "I am sorry to tell you that the Seventh-day Adventists are aborting hundreds of babies in their hospitals."[3]

While they sang a hymn I went out . . . unseen but not unshaken. What was the truth regarding Adventism and abortion? I remembered

seeing an editorial in the Adventist Review which had stated that, "the Adventist Church has no official position on abortion."[4] But what does that mean? Does it mean that Seventh-day Adventists see no moral implications surrounding the practice of abortion? Does the Church really have no bias in either direction? What does the lack of an "official position" mean in the actual day-to-day practice of the hospitals of the Adventist Health System? Most rank and file Adventists believe that our hospitals perform abortions very infrequently and then only in extreme or life-threatening situations. Was it possible that they had been misinformed and that this preacher was right? What indeed, is the truth about Adventism and abortion? A search for answers to these questions led me to survey the history of our church's position on abortion.

Adventism and America's First Right-to-Life Movement

In 19th century America, the practice of abortion was widespread.[5] Then in the 1820's medical science made a momentous discovery. The human ovum was discovered and with it came the realization that a distinct human life was created through the fertilization of the ovum with a sperm. The discovery that throughout her pregnancy the woman is "with child" led the American Medical Association in 1859 "to pass a resolution condemning induced abortion and urging state legislatures to pass laws forbidding it."[6] The earlier laws in America had been based on the English "common law" theory that human life was present only from the point of "quickening" (sometime between 13 and 20 weeks) onward.[7] Dr Horatio Robinson Storer

led the campaign to make abortion, except to save the life of the mother, a criminal offense at any point during a pregnancy.[8] Dr Storer and his colleagues condemned abortion as "the unwarrantable destruction of human life."[9] The efforts of these doctors to protect human life at every stage of development has been called by historian James Mohr, "The Physicians' Crusade Against Abortion."[10] This first "right-to-life" movement in the United States took place between 1850 and 1890.[11]

This movement coincided with the formation and establishment of the SDA Church in North America. There are several statements from Adventist publications at that time which make it clear that both General Conference and medical leadership were cognizant of the movement and sided with the physicians against abortion.

The June 25, 1867 Advent Review and Sabbath Herald contained what apparently was the first statement on abortion to appear in Adventist literature. In an article titled "Fashionable Murder," the author, John Todd, praised the work of the Physicians' Crusade. He stated that,

> . . . the medical profession have taken a noble stand. The desolations have become so fearful that, as the guardians of human life, they are compelled to do so: and society owes a debt of gratitude to Dr H R Storer, of Boston, especially for his powerful arguments, lucid arrangement of facts, patient investigations and earnest and eloquent remonstrances. Among his writings on this subject, the little work entitled "Why Not?" is a "book for every woman," and I wish every woman might carefully read it. But the medical profession cannot arrest the evil, and they tell me they need, and must have, the moral power of good people to aid them.[12]

Todd went on to say that,

> . . .in the sight of God it is willful murder. The

> willful killing of a human being at any stage of its existence, is murder' . . .
> The practice is a direct war against human society, that the best good of the country, against the family order, against the health, the peace, the conscience, and the moral well-being of the mother, and against a child which could otherwise have an immortal existence.[13]

Todd raised an interesting point for Seventh-day Adventists when he said:

> I am sorry to learn from undoubted testimony, that the practice is far more common among Protestants than among Catholics.[14]

The abortion question was again addressed in the November 30, 1869 issue of the Advent Review and Sabbath Herald during the editorship of J N Andrews. Entitled, "A Few Words Concerning a Great Sin" the Review made the following statement:

> One of the most shocking, and yet one of the most prevalent sins of this generation, is the murder of unborn infants. Let those who think this a small sin, read Psalm 139:16. They will see that even the unborn child is written in God's book. And they may be well assured that God will not pass unnoticed the murder of such children.[15]

The next reference to abortion in the Adventist press is contained in the book, A Solemn Appeal. This book was edited by James White in 1870 while he was president of the General Conference. He introduced the statement which he excerpted from Dr E P Miller's Exhausted Vitality, by calling the book "a valuable little volume" which contained "important extracts". The quotation he used reflects the strong sentiments of those physicians involved in the crusade against abortion.

> Few are aware of the fearful extent to which this nefarious business, this worse than devilish practice, is carried on in all classes of society! Many a woman determines that she will not become a

> mother, and subjects herself to the vilest treatment, committing the basest crime to carry out her purpose. And many a man, who has 'as many children as he can support,' instead of restraining his passions, aids in the destruction of the babes he has begotten.
>
> The sin lies at the door of both parents in equal measure . . .
>
> And besides all this, the consequences of such a practice are most disastrous both upon the physical and moral nature of those whose souls are stained with this terrible sin.[16]

The use of these statements by the General Conference president is another indication of where early Adventist leadership stood on this issue.

Where did the "right arm" of the church, the medical work, stand on the abortion question? In his book, Man, the Masterpiece, published in 1894, Dr John Harvey Kellogg wrote:

> The idea held by many that the destruction of foetal life is not a crime until after 'quickening' has occurred, is a gross and mischievous error. No change occurs in the developing human being at this period. The so-called period of 'quickening' is simply the period at which the movements of the little one become sufficiently active and vigorous to attract the attention of the mother. Long before this, slight movements have been taking place, and from the very moment of conception, those processes have been in operation which result in the production of a fully developed human being from a mere jelly drop, a minute cell. As soon as this development begins, a new human being has come into existence, -- in embryo, it is true, but possessed of its own individuality, with its own future, its possibilities of joy, grief, success, failure, fame, and ignominy. From this moment, it acquires the right to life, a right so sacred that in every land to violate it is to incur the penalty of death. How many murderers and murderesses have gone unpunished! None but God knows the full extent of this most heinous crime; but the Searcher of all hearts knows and remembers every one who has thus transgressed; and in the day of final

> reckoning, what will the verdict be? Murder? -- MURDER, child-murder, the slaughter of the innocents, more cruel than Herod, more cold-blooded than the midnight assassin, more criminal than the man who slays his enemy, -- the most unnatural, the most inhuman, the most revolting of all crimes against human life.[17]

This statement by Dr Kellogg affirms the unique "individuality" of this "new human being" and its "right to life" from "the very moment of conception." It espouses the position of the "Physicians' Crusade" and is in harmony with earlier statements in the Adventist press.

The above quoted statements verify the widely unknown fact that historic Adventism has not been silent regarding the abortion question. While the Church did not directly involve itself in the 40-year battle to legislate anti-abortion statute law in the United States, there can be no question based on the above evidence as to where these Adventist leaders stood on the issues in that crusade.

Although not directly related to the abortion issue, the Church's counsel to young men entering military service was rooted in the same sanctity of human life concept that motivated the above quoted statements. The position of not bearing arms was taken to insure that Seventh-day Adventists not break the 6th Commandment by killing a fellow human being. It was also taken as a response of discipleship to the call and example of Jesus' redemptive activity for human beings. The following statement made in 1941 summarizes nearly a century of historic Adventist thinking on this issue:

> He went about doing good (Acts 10:38), doing things which were <u>the exact opposite of destroying human life . . .</u>
> On the basis of this teaching and example of Jesus Christ, <u>the taking of human life</u>, to a Seventh-day Adventist, seems so <u>completely incompatible with</u>

> his profession of Christian discipleship, that he is constrained to take the position of noncombatant in war.[18] (emphasis mine)

The connection between noncombatancy and the abortion question was seen by one Adventist physician who was quoted anonymously in the March, 1971 issue of Ministry: "It will be tragic indeed if our church should support the free and willful destruction of human life (abortion for convenience), while urging those who are of military age not to bear arms in order to refrain from taking life--even that of an enemy."[19]

This consistent Adventist opposition to the taking of human life found support from Ellen G White who made a number of strong sanctity of human life statements. She said in The Ministry of Healing,

> Life is mysterious and sacred. It is the manifestation of God Himself, the source of all life. Precious are its opportunities, and earnestly should they be improved. Once lost, they are gone forever. . . .
>
> God looks into the tiny seed that He Himself has formed, and sees wrapped within it the beautiful flower, the shrub, or the lofty, wide-spreading tree. So does He see the possibilities in every human being.[20]

And in Patriarchs and Prophets, she spoke even more directly to the point of protecting innocent human life when she said,

> Human life, which God alone could give, must be sacredly guarded.[21]

And so we find as part of our Adventist heritage statements which both explicitly espouse the sanctity of human life and explicitly condemn abortion. This brief historical survey indicates that 19th century Adventism stood in harmony with the previous 18 centuries of Christian thought stretching back to the Didache (100 AD) which commanded early Christians, ". . . Thou shalt not murder a child by

abortion nor kill that which is begotten." (2:2).

By the 1890's the "Physicians' Crusade" was successful in influencing the legislation of anti-abortion laws in the United States. This resulted in a cooling of public debate over abortion and began what has been called the "century of silence" on the abortion question.[22] In reality, the "silence" lasted for approximately 70 years. Christian thinking on abortion remained consistent during this period into the mid-20th century. Dietrich Bonhoeffer, the Lutheran pastor and theologian, is one example of this consistency of thought. Best known for his opposition to the Nazi persecution of the Jews, Bonhoeffer also reaffirmed the historic Christian stance on abortion when in 1940-41 he wrote:

> Destruction of the embryo in the mother's womb is a violation of the right to live which God has bestowed upon this nascent life. To raise the question whether we are here concerned already with a human being or not is merely to confuse the issue. The simple fact is that God certainly intended to create a human being and that this nascent human being has been deliberately deprived of his life and that is nothing but murder.[23]

This opposition to abortion was not only to be found in the church, it was also evidenced in the society at large. As recently as 1963 a Planned Parenthood pamphlet warned that, "An abortion kills the life of a baby after it has begun. It is dangerous to your life and health."[24]

James Londis points out that, "Not until comparatively recent times did Christian theologians begin to argue that other considerations affected the discussion, such as the "quality-of-life" of existing members of the family, emotional stress on the parents, and

overwhelming financial burdens."[25] The call for abortion rights was sounded with increasing intensity in American society throughout the decade of the 1960's. A movement was begun to repeal the anti-abortion statute laws enacted in the 19th century.

Community pressures Hawaiian hospital

The years 1970 and 1971 proved pivotal for the Seventh-day Adventist Church in its stance on abortion. In January 1970, a bill was introduced in the State Legislature of Hawaii to repeal the state abortion laws. Three weeks later the bill was law. Castle Memorial Hospital (an SDA institution) suddenly found itself needing to establish a position regarding abortion. On the Island of Oahu, Hawaii, only two hospitals were open to the public for maternity or OB cases. There was Kapiloani Hospital, which was exclusively an OB-GYN facility and Castle Memorial Hospital, which was the only general hospital that accepted OB-GYN patients. (A third institution, Kaiser Hospital cared only for those people enrolled in the Kaiser Health Plan.)

Due to its unique position of being a general hospital that provided OB-GYN services, Castle Memorial, upon repeal of Hawaii's abortion laws received numerous requests for elective abortions. Requests for abortion were not new and Castle Memorial had in the past performed what it termed, therapeutic abortions - to save the life of the mother, or in the case of rape or incest, or even for severe mental anxiety in the mother.[26] But the repeal of all state abortion laws had created a new situation for which the hospital was unprepared.

Marvin C Midkiff, the Administrator of Castle Memorial Hospital at that time tells the following story:

> . . . a prominent man in this community came to me and said, "my 16 year old daughter has got herself in trouble. She is in her second month of pregnancy, and I want an abortion for her at this hospital." He brought out a brochure that had been used for fund raising in this community when this hospital was being planned. The brochure stated, "this hospital will be a FULL SERVICE HOSPITAL and will provide every service that is needed by the residents of the community." He brought me the $25,000 check that he had given towards the construction several years ago. What would you do?[27]

The pressure on Castle Memorial to be a "full service hospital" by providing abortion on demand began to grow. M C Midkiff called W J Blacker, president of the Pacific Union Conference and asked for guidance from the Church on how to proceed. Elder Blacker informed the General Conference of the situation and then according to M C Midkiff called to tell him that "no one knows of any position the Church has taken on it (abortion)."[28] In response to that information Castle Memorial Hospital made an interim decision in which M C Midkiff reported that:

> In the absence of any decision by our church organization on whether or not we approve or disapprove of abortion, or whether or not we permit abortions in the hospital, our management group has made the decision to permit abortion for other than therapeutic reasons through the first trimester (3 months) of pregnancy, provided there has been counseling by a clergyman, and by two qualified physicians, and written consultations have been entered in the patients records. I want to make it clear that this is a temporary ruling until such time as a decision is handed down from our church headquarters in Washington, DC.[29]

On March 11, 1970, the General Conference Officers appointed a

committee to consider counsel to be given to the SDA hospitals. The thinking at this time was that the Church would consider the abortion question in June, 1970 in Atlantic City, NJ at the General Conference Session.

On March 17, 1970, Elder Neal C Wilson, president of the North American Division, made a statement on abortion that was carried by the Religious News Service. He predicted that when the denomination met at Atlantic City in June it would steer a middle-of-the-road course on abortion. He was quoted as saying that,

> The Church deplores anything that would contribute to declining morals and would steer away from anything which would encourage promiscuousness. . . . Therefore, we would not feel it our responsibility to promote laws to legalize abortion . . . nor oppose them. . . .
>
> Though we walk the fence, SDA's lean towards abortion rather than against it. Because we realize we are confronted by big problems of hunger and over population, we do not oppose family planning and appropriate endeavors to control population.[30]

He stated that because the denomination is active in 220 different countries and would therefore have a difficult time taking a hard and fast position on the abortion question. He also said that Adventists have no position against sterilization and might favor abortion in some instances (rape, mental or physical illnesses in the mother or in cases of probable severe illness in the fetus).[31]

On May 13, 1970 after considerable discussion and rewriting the GC Officers voted to accept "suggestive guidelines for therapeutic abortions." (The guidelines were of necessity "suggestive" since they were voted by the GC Officers and not by the General Conference Committee). The guidelines are as follows:

It is believed that therapeutic abortions may be performed for the following established indications:

1. When continuation of pregnancy may threaten the life of the woman or seriously impair her health.

2. When continuation of the pregnancy is likely to result in the birth of a child with grave physical deformities or mental retardation.

3. When conception has occurred as a result of rape or incest.

When indicated therapeutic abortions are done, they should be performed during the first trimester of pregnancy.

The plan to take the Guidelines to the floor of the GC Session at Atlantic City in June 1970 for discussion and a vote was dropped. The feeling among some of the medical community was that the Abortion Guidelines were inadequate because therapeutic abortions had been performed all along even before the repeal of Hawaii's abortion statutes. Marvin C Midkiff went home from Atlantic City to Castle Memorial unable to fulfill his promise of coming home with the official position of the church.[32]

Moving toward a liberalized policy

The issue however remained alive. The rejection of the May 13, 1970, abortion guidelines by the medical community signaled the beginning of serious discussions regarding the feasibility of an open door policy in Adventist hospitals to abortion on demand. During the first week of July, 1970, Elder R R Bietz, vice president of the General Conference met in Honolulu with A G Streifling, chairman of the Board of Trustees of Castle Memorial Hospital and M C Midkiff,

administrator. Elder Bietz relayed the substance of their conversation in a letter to Elder W J Blacker on July 8, 1970. The following statements from that letter shed light on the thinking of leadership after the first abortion guidelines were rejected:

> Five or six non-adventist M.D.s who patronize Castle Memorial wish to go beyond the present policy of performing therapeutic abortions only. If they are not allowed to do this in Castle Memorial, they will take their patients to other hospitals in the city of Honolulu. If this is done, chances are fairly good that they will take their patients over there for other treatments as well. This could mean a loss of goodwill and also patronage for Castle Memorial. . . .
>
> Our own Seventh-day Adventist doctors strongly oppose, except for therapeutic reasons, abortions.[1] This further complicates the problem. If we change our policy we may have the ill-will of our own men, and if we don't change we'll be misunderstood by the non-Adventist M.D.s. Some heavy contributors to the Castle Memorial Hospital feel we should be willing to work in harmony with the laws of the state. In their opinion the community, federal and state monies have for all practical purposes made this a community hospital. They reason, therefore, that community wishes should be taken into consideration. . .
>
> It is important that either the Pacific Union Conference, the North American Division, or the General Conference take a position in regard to this matter. The hospital administration and Board need support no matter which direction they might go. Should the decision be to have abortions beyond what they are doing now, the Adventist doctors could no doubt be satisfied or at least silenced if the administration would have the support of the higher church organization.
>
> As I see it, the crux of the matter is mostly theological.[33] (Emphases mine)

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[1] Marvin Midkiff remembers one non-SDA doctor and one SDA doctor who pushed for a policy change allowing elective abortions.

Elder Bietz concluded his letter by suggesting that, "It may well be that the church will want to tell each hospital to solve its own problem. . . . We could be easily misunderstood in this question if it is not handled wisely. . . . The wisdom of Solomon is something we need to pray for."[34]

Meanwhile at the GC Officers meeting, July 6, 1970 it was voted to enlarge "the former committee so as to study what counsel should be given regarding elective abortions."[35] This decision was made in response to a request for "further counsel regarding elective abortion." The local members of what was now called the Abortion Problems Committee met on July 20, 1970 to discuss the implications of the issue for the Church and its health care institutions. This small committee also looked specifically at "the viewpoint of our West Coast leaders in gynecology." No solutions were arrived at and the committee recommended further study.

The committee met again on September 25, 1970 and recommended that "the enlarged committee appointed July 20, 1970, be further expanded to make it representative of additional areas of concern and that it be authorized to meet for approximately two days to study the problem in depth hopefully to develop guidelines that will be useful in bringing uniformity into the direction given our health care institutions in North America."[36] The committee concluded its meeting with, "the expressed hope that due to the urgency described in correspondence from our health care institutions the expanded committee might meet for study as early as possible to give study to this challenging question."[37]

Chief of staff urges decision

It was on December 13, 1970, that Dr Raymond deHay, M.D., chief of staff at Castle Memorial wrote to A G Streifling asking that the decision process be expedited. He said that "this decision has been under deliberation for some ten months now" and was "much too long a time . . . without some answer being communicated to the members of the medical staff of this hospital."[38]

On December 16, 1970, Dr deHay wrote a second letter to protest the delay of a decision, this time to Elder R H Pierson, president of the General Conference. Dr deHay made the following remarks to Elder Pierson:

> It is our understanding that the Seventh-day Adventist Church in all of its history has never taken a stand or made any ruling regarding either birth control or abortion. . . . We recognize that Castle Memorial Hospital is a church-operated hospital but we also feel that you must concede to being at least a quasi public hospital in the eyes of many local residents who consider Castle Memorial Hospital to be a community hospital. . . . Many people in the community who were not Seventh-day Adventists gave of their time and resources to make this hospital a reality. I believe it is also timely for me to point out that the State has appropriated on two occasions the total sum of over one million dollars to assist in construction costs of your medical institution. Considering these matters we on the Medical Executive Committee feel that perhaps the local public is justified in requesting total care at Castle Memorial Hospital.[39]

Dr deHay then referred to the lack of an "official stand on abortion" by the church and said, "We have rather reliable information that a number of your west coast hospitals are permitting abortion which is termed therapeutic but appears to be greatly liberalized as to the

actual definition of therapeutic abortion as we in the medical profession have come to understand it over the years. We feel that there is already a precedent for permitting this surgical procedure at this hospital."[40]

Elder Pierson's response to Dr deHay on January 5, 1971, defended the May 13, 1970 "Abortion Guidelines" document by saying that "They are based upon our appreciation for the sanctity of life, respect for the person image, and our sense of responsibility for the care of fellowmen."[41] [emphasis mine] Elder Pierson then stated:

> We stand ready to assist in making total health care available to all. However, Doctor, we have not conceded to the assumption that total health care includes abortion on demand. Our guidelines allow for therapeutic abortions when life or health of the expectant mother are jeopardized. We do not feel the term "health care" rightfully includes a procedure that is requested merely because of desire based upon convenience.[42]

Elder Pierson then informed Dr deHay that, "A competent committee will be meeting in Loma Linda, California, January 25 to discuss the matter further."[43]

The decision to hold the Loma Linda meeting on January 25, 1971, had been made at the GC Officers' meeting on January 4, 1971. By the January 6, 1971, GC Officers' meeting the "expanded" committee became a "reconstituted" committee[44] and on January 11, 1971, W R Beach invited this "restructured"[45] abortion committee to meet at Loma Linda, California, on January 25, 1971. One physician, Dr James E Anderson, who was invited to be a committee member wrote to Elder N C Wilson to say that he had "noted among the committee members those whom I feel are very logical, realistic, and would I'm sure, approach problems like

this with great discretion and much careful consideration. . . . He went on to say that, "It is my firm conviction that abortions are not a religious problem with questions of moral versus immoral factors."[46]

And so, on January 25, 1971, in Loma Linda, one year after the abortion issue had been brought again to the attention of the 20th century church, an ad hoc committee convened "to make sure that the cause of truth and humanity are recognized theologically, medically and philosophically in this large area of concern today."[47] Of the 18 individuals named to the "restructured" committee on January 6, 1971, 11 were present. To these 11 were added 4 new members, making it an ad hoc committee of 15 members. Those members present were: W R Beach, David Hinshaw, MD, P C Heubach, C B Hirsch, Gordon Hyde, Joann Krause, Elizabeth Larsen, MD, R E Osborn, Jack W Provonsha, MD, A G Streifling, W D Walton, N C Wilson, Mrs C Woodward, Harold Ziprick, MD, C E Bradford. [The most notable committee member not present was Elder R H Pierson, who had declared just 20 days earlier his support for the existing guidelines.]

W R Beach, committee chairman, in his opening remarks, reviewed the work of the Abortion Committee stating that the Abortion Guidelines of May 13, 1970, had been helpful, but that the rapidly changing situation, especially in Hawaii and New York made a new and updated statement necessary.[48] Harold Ziprick, M.D., the head of LLU's Ob-Gyn department presented a paper entitled "The Abortion Problem Today," showing the complexity of the abortion question. The rest of the morning was spent discussing the numbers of therapeutic abortions in Adventist hospitals [e.g. Glendale Hospital--1966, 1 abortion; 1967, 3

abortions; 1968, 4 abortions; 1969, 10 abortions; 1970, 34 abortions. White Memorial Hospital--1968, 3 abortions; 1969, 12 abotions; 1970, 79 abortions.][49] Also discussed were the problems Castle Memorial was facing due to the repeal of Hawaii's abortion laws.

In the afternoon session Jack Provonsha, M.D. presented a paper titled "An Adventist Position Regarding the Abortion Problem." Dr Provonsha advocated that with each request for abortion every attempt should be made to save both the pregnant woman and the developing fetus "but if this cannot be achieved and one must be sacrificed, the lower must be sacrificed in favor of the higher human value."[50] Following Dr Provonsha's presentation, the committee voted to amend and revise the May 13, 1970, Abortion Guidelines. The committee concluded its work that day by recommending that the GC Officers appoint a committee to give continued study to the issue.

Back in Washington this committee began its work by turning first to the task of amending and revising the old guidelines. This work developed into an entirely new document entitled "Interruption of Pregnancy Guidelines." This document contained both a Statement of Principles and Guidelines to acceptable "interruptions of pregnancy." A comparison of this document with the papers presented by Drs Ziprick and Provonsha at the Loma Linda meeting shows that their ideas and wording served as primary sources for both the Statement of Principles and the Guidelines.

The work on the new "Guidelines" involved a number of rewrites and revisions. During the month of February the Statement of Principles was first composed and then expanded. Between February and June of

1971 the Guidelines themselves were composed in at least 3 different forms. First, a fourth guideline was added to the three from the original Abortion Guidelines, stating that, "In case of an unwed child under 15 years of age" abortion was permitted. Later a fifth guideline was added that permitted abortion "When, in harmony with the statement of principles above, the requirements of functional human life demand the sacrifice of the lesser potential human value." Soon thereafter guideline #5 underwent still another revision.

Elder W R Beach referred to guideline #5 in a letter responding to Elder N C Wilson on March 8, 1971. He thanked Elder Wilson for his observations of March 2, on the report of the committee on abortion. He then continued, "I think some of your observations are indispensable. I am therefore suggesting that all but three be incorporated immediately into our text."[51] Referring to one of Elder Wilson's three observations that he questioned [regarding consultation before an abortion], Elder Beach cautioned that, "Your wording could liberalize our viewpoint a little more than perhaps we should at present."[52] Later in the letter, he agreed with Elder Wilson that the word "grave" as pertaining to physical deformities and mental retardation in guideline #2 should be dropped. He then stated his preference to retain the word "seriously" in guideline #1. Elder Beach also referred to guideline #5 by saying that it would, "cover less definitive reasons for any interruptions of pregnancy."[53] It was after this exchange between Elder N C Wilson and Elder W R Beach in early March (and sometime before June 21) that guideline #5 was revised to read, "When for <u>some reason</u> the requirements of functional human life

demand the sacrifice of the lesser potential human value" abortion is permitted. [emphasis mine] The word "seriously" in guideline #1 was also deleted during this time. (See Appendix)

The Statement which included most of the revisions noted above was then filed with the GC Officers in a "tentative report". But no action was taken and pressure from the Pacific Union for a decision continued to build. W J Blacker wrote to N C Wilson on March 30, 1971 and reported that,

> On March 26, Brother Midkiff called me from Hawaii, and he is very much concerned about the abortion problem, and is anxious to get a report so that they will know how to proceed. And I too am anxious to get the direction on this problem so that we will know how to relate ourselves to it. When can we expect to receive some word from you or from the General Conference Office?[54]

W R Beach wrote to N C Wilson again on May 11, 1971 and said,

> The field continues to harass me on the problem of abortions. The Pacific Union seems to be hard pressed in this area. I am never sure, of course, if one of my friends at the office (he could be vice president for North America!) is not behind this pressure and harassment.[55]

Beach gives an insight into why he delayed pushing the Statement when later in his letter he stated,

> My opinion is that we must avoid opening the door to abortion on demand, but rather keep it within the context of a total philosophy. If I read the literature aright, there is a growing feeling in favor of a more conservative line than that promoted by the liberation movement and adopted, more or less, in some of the States. We need to watch this and make sure that our philosophy is basically sound.[56]

It was a month later on June 14, 1971 that the GC Officers voted: To request Neal C Wilson, C E Bradford, and R F Waddell to serve as a

committee to refine certain aspects of the report "Interruption of Pregnancy" submitted by the Committee on Abortions.[57]

On that same day of June 14, Elder W J Blacker wrote to Elder N C Wilson asking,

> When, oh when, are we going to get the "Guidelines on Abortion?
>
> Please do all you can to jar this matter loose or we are just going to have to proceed on our own because we cannot hold this matter any longer. Is this one of the problems that we face because we do not have a North American Division organization as such?[58]

Elder Wilson responded to Elder Blacker on July 13, 1971 and said,

> Please contain yourself and do not become too ecstatic, but at long last we have a report for you regarding the interruption of pregnancy. This is a more sophisticated term than "abortions," and since there are therapeutic and elective, we feel that the new term covers the whole spectrum. To be sure, we have not answered every question that can come up, nor have we made provision for opening up the door in harmony with certain pressures that are being brought to bear on the medical profession today. We feel it is a fair position and one that we can defend. I hope it will be helpful to you and to our brethren who have been facing the music for over a year now in Hawaii.[59]

Elder Wilson's letter referred to the fact that finally, on June 21, 1971, the General Conference Officers had voted to accept the "Interruption of Pregnancy Statement of Principles." Still, it wasn't until August 10, 1971, that Elder C E Bradford, secretary of the now-named Committee on Interruption of Pregnancy released the statement, ". . . as the opinion of a representative committee of theologians, physicians, teachers, nurses, psychiatrists, laymen, etc., who met at

Loma Linda, California January 25, 1971,[2] with the understanding that the report is to be used as counsel to denominational medical institutions. . . ."[60] The statement was subtitled, "Recommendations to SDA Medical Institutions." Elder Bradford in his covering letter made the following observation, "I suppose you would say this is quasi official without the full imprimatur of the brethren."[61] [emphasis mine]

So after more than a year and a half of intermittent committee work and discussion the SDA Church still had no "official position" on the abortion question. Did this mean that Castle Memorial Hospital was still left in the same quandary regarding abortion on demand as they had found themselves in with the repeal of Hawaii's abortion laws in January, 1970? This answer was no. The wording of the new Guidelines was "broad enough to interpret any way you chose to."[62] This allowed Castle Memorial to open its doors to abortion on demand through the twentieth week (and even later for "compelling social or medical reasons")[63] and still be in harmony with General Conference guidelines. It would appear that the wisdom of allowing "each hospital to solve its own problem"[64] had prevailed.

Continuing confusion re church's policy

So, what is the truth about Adventism and abortion? The answer is

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[2] Dr Jack Provonsha stated from the floor at Loma Linda University's "Conference on Abortion," November 15, 1988, that although his paper's wording was used in the 1971 Interruption of Pregnancy Statement that it was used out of context and that he did not see or vote on the statement until it was released to the SDA medical institutions as a completed document.

that a straight answer is hard to come by. A flow of confusing and misleading information on this question began even before the Abortion Committee had finished its work. In March 1971, nine months after the General Conference Officers voted "to study what counsel should be given regarding elective abortions",[65] The Ministry published an issue on the abortion question. The cover photo pictured a new-born baby, held upside down by the feet being X-ed out and asked the question, "Is Abortion the Answer?" Two articles were run in response to that question. In the first article entitled, "Abortion?", Elder W R Beach concluded his remarks by saying, "that except in the extreme circumstances listed under our guidelines on therapeutic abortion [author's note: May 13, 1970 guidelines], it would be better to enhance our reverence for life and the Christian way that leads to it."[66] The second article was entitled, "Abortion is Not the Answer" and was written by Dr Ralph F Waddell, secretary of the General Conference Department of Health. Dr Waddell called abortion a "war on the womb" and said, "As Christians we abhor the thought of wholesale carnage on this level. Although we accept therapeutic abortion based on proved medical indications, we do not find abortion on demand compatible with our person image concepts."[67] He went on to say that therapeutic abortions should be performed "during the first three months, before the embryo can be considered to possess life in itself."[68]

In this same issue, The Ministry published the "Abortion Guidelines" of May 13, 1970. It is important to remember that this is March, 1971. In Loma Linda on January 25, 1971, the restructured Abortion Committee had voted to "amend and revise" these original

Guidelines. By March 2, 1971 the new Interruption of Pregnancy Guidelines was written and in its final revisions stage.[69]

There was one General Conference officer and member of the Abortion Committee who vigorously protested publishing this material. Elder Robert E Osborn in a letter to Elder W R Beach on March 2, 1971 pointedly asked, "In view of the articles which are in the current issue of The Ministry (March 1971) on abortion, why should we have spent a whole day at Loma Linda recently with the corresponding costs of conducting such a meeting?"[70] He questioned the printing of the guidelines saying, "The abortion guidelines . . . were supposed to have been guidance to our medical institutions and I did not realize they would get into print in a general paper."[71] He went on to say that, "It seems to me that the articles are completely premature, or else the appointment of a committee to look into the matter in depth is a farce."[72] Elder Osborn's protest was based on his knowledge that the original guidelines were deemed too restrictive and were being superceded. He therefore opposed the publishing of them.

Elder Beach defended the decision to publish the articles and guidelines in his letter to Elder Osborn of March 8, 1971. He said,

> . . .in view of the fact that the upcoming report of the committee which met in Loma Linda will liberalize somewhat the current guidelines, I believe that from a practical viewpoint, it was well to give the rationale for the current situation and the future viewpoints. I think it will be evident that our viewpoint has been liberalized. I feel, however, that this liberalization will be understood and accepted.
>
> Perhaps now we are both confused![73]

But the publishing of the new guidelines which would have allowed

the "liberalization" to be "understood and accepted" never happened. That the older, more restrictive set of guidelines was published and the newer, more liberalized set was not, resulted in a great deal of confusion among the Adventist clergy and laity regarding the church's position on abortion and its practice in our medical institutions.[3] There is no evidence that leadership attempted to educate the clergy and the church regarding the new set of guidelines and its implications. In fact, one seeks in vain for evidence of a determined, good-faith effort from leadership to overcome the inertia of that original release of misinformation.

Leadership's reason for maintaining this duplicity (16 years & counting) is all too clear. It has allowed the Church to present to its own clergy and laity, and to the general public[4] as well, a restrictive stance toward abortion, based on the published May 13, 1970 Abortion Guidelines. At the same time it allowed the Church to permit its hospitals a free hand in the economically significant practice of abortion on demand, on the basis of the unpublished Interruption of Pregnancy Guidelines.

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[3] A recent case in point: On April 23, 1987, copies of the discarded May 13, 1970 guidelines were presented to members of the Columbia Union Executive Committee as the church's position during a discussion relative to a request from the Ohio Conference constituency for guidance on the abortion question.

[4] The Christian Action Council in their 1984 publication, A Community Planning Guide for Sanctity of Human Life Sunday included a "Summary of Attitudes Toward Abortion by Religious Organizations." The Seventh-day Adventist Church was listed in Group 2 (see Guide, page 15) as "generally opposed to abortion but would make exceptions in hard cases (e.g. pregnancy resulting from rape or incest, pregnancy leading to the birth of a baby with deformities or birth defects, pregnancy resulting in a severe threat to the mother's health)."

Statements in the Church press since 1971 have continued this confusion on where the Church stands on abortion. Twelve years after the 1971 decision, an editorial by Eugene Durand in the Adventist Review, "About Abortion,"[74] once again emphasized the "1970 . . . abortion guidelines" as "the nearest this church came to a stand on the problem."[75] The editorial later listed guidelines #4 and #5 but made no effort to point out why they were added or what they meant. The only comment made was that, "Probably most Adventists would agree with these guidelines."[76] And so the vast majority of Adventists went on as before, unaware of the true state of affairs in the Adventist Health System.

The "Dear Miriam" column in the Adventist Review of September 1, 1985, continued the confusion. A reader wrote to her "very concerned about some friends of ours who have asked to have their names removed from the church books because they don't want to be part of a church whose hospitals perform 'abortions of convenience' and that takes no stand on the issue of abortion."[77] Wood responded by saying that upon reading this letter she "communicated immediately with the Health and Temperance Department of the General Conference and discovered that a statement of 'Abortion Guidelines' was drawn up back in 1970 and given to all Adventist hospitals. The statement is very clear indeed."[78] Wood then proceeded to quote the three original guidelines for theraputic abortions. She went on to imply that "abortions of convenience" in Adventist hospitals were the result of "infractions of guidelines and rules."[79] Apparently Wood was not told about the second more liberal set of guidelines titled Interruption of Pregnancy

Guidelines.

Compounding the confusion

But the greatest single release of misinformation to the Church on this question came from the president of AHS/US, Donald Welch. On February 13, 1986, the Adventist Review ran what it called an "In-depth look at the Adventist Health System." The issue featured a 7-page interview of Donald Welch conducted by Adventist Review editor, William G Johnsson and associate editor, Myron K Widmer. In the interview Welch made the following statement:

> The Church developed guidelines for hospitals and health-care institutions in regard to abortions back in 1969 (sic.). Those guidelines strongly discourage abortions. They do allow for abortions in certain cases where there is medical consultation--several doctors agree that it needs to be done for the health of the mother, and in certain other cases such as rape.[80]

It is important to note once again that Donald Welch too is referring to the 1970 Abortion Guidelines rather than the 1971 Interruption of Pregnancy Guidelines. Welch continued in the interview to say that our Adventist hospitals "don't do abortions for social or economic reasons, but are doing them only when a number of physicians feel it is medically justified for the safety and health of the mother."[81] Welch continued with an even more incredible assertion when he said, "I will be frank and tell you there was a time when a number of our institutions did quite a few abortions, and that situation led to these guidelines."[82] Whether or not he intended them to be, Welch's statements were misleading, to say the least.

Donald Welch's statements must be judged on their own merit but what about the role of the Adventist Review in passing on this misinformation to the Church? When confronted with six specific instances of discrepancy from fact in Welch's statement, in three separate meetings at the Adventist Review offices over the next two months, W G Johnsson, editor of the Adventist Review, decided to let "Letters to the Editor" clear up the problem. He later decided to run neither of two letters (one letter was discarded for being "late")[83] which spoke directly to the misinformation. So, the Adventist Review, continued a fifteen-year pattern in the church press allowing Donald Welch's statement to stand without challenge and the Church-at-large was once again spared the truth.

Adventism and abortion

So what is the truth about Adventism and abortion? Is abortion on demand the norm for the institutions of AHS/US? Commenting on this question Marvin C Midkiff said,

> My other disagreement is that the article[5] (at least to me) leaves the impression that Adventist Hospitals permit only therapeutic abortions to be done in their facilities. I believe if you do a bit of research you will find that the majority of Adventist hospitals permit abortion on request. As late as last week (October 1986) a nurse who works in that department at Washington Adventist Hospital tells me they do abortions on request all the time. I believe this is a very common pattern. (I am not saying it is wrong, I am just saying it is what is happening.)[84]

This comment confirms a statement made by Ronald D Marx, president of

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5 M Widmer, "Current Suggested Guidelines," Adventist Review, September 25, 1986, pp. 14, 15.

Washington Adventist Hospital on April 19, 1985 when in a letter to this writer he stated, "The administration, therefore, in good faith, leaves the responsibility of deciding for or against abortion to the physician and the patient, who really are the only individuals who know the full medical situation and consequences of the case. I do not want to give the impression that we are for abortion or that we try to rationalize in its favor."[85]

"The American Hospital Association Guide to the Health Care Field, 1986" lists 12 of the 56 Adventist Hospitals in the United States as offering "abortion services" including "a program and facilities."[86] The hospitals listed are as follows: Castle Medical Center, Hadley Memorial Hospital, Hanford Community Hospital, Loma Linda University Medical Center, Porter Memorial Hospital, Portland Adventist Medical Center, Shady Grove Adventist Hospital, Shawnee Mission Medical Center, Sierra Vista Hospital, Walla Walla General Hospital, Washington Adventist Hospital, and White Memorial Medical Center. One could be forgiven for wondering if our other hospital supplied reports on which the "Guide" is based are accurate as to the difference between therapeutic abortion and elective abortion.

It is apparent that abortion on demand for any reason is practiced in a number of significant Adventist hospitals and that this practice is not out of harmony with current Church guidelines. But was the preacher correct when he said that, "The SDA's are aborting hundreds of babies in their hospitals"? In response to a question about the numbers of abortions performed at Washington Adventist Hospital, Ronald D Marx, president, said, "We do not maintain statistics on abortions

performed."[87] When The Washington Post, in its coverage of a "Pastors' Protest Against Abortion" demonstration in front of Washington Adventist Hospital and Sligo SDA Church, on October 5, 1985, asked for a statement from the Hospital, its spokesman, Reg Burgess, replied that abortions, "aren't just performed willy-nilly at the hospital."[88] A nurse employed at Washington Adventist Hospital in June 1985 had a different story to tell. She said, "Some doctors treat us like their own private abortion clinic. There are some days when we stack them (abortions) up."[89] The "Pastors' Protest" supplied the figure of 1,494 performed at WAH from 1975 - July, 1982. They reported that these "statistics were furnished by the Medical Records section of the Washington Adventist Hospital in Takoma Park, Maryland."[90] It would appear that the preacher was justified in his assertion based on the figures from just one of our Adventist hospitals that provide "abortion services."

In summary

And so we find that early Adventism published positions in harmony with the Physicians' Crusade Against Abortion, though it was not active in that movement. The church produced its first set of abortion guidelines in 1970, when American attitudes toward abortion had changed and some of the church's hospitals were experiencing growing pressure from their surrounding communities to provide abortion services.

Less than a year after the first set of abortion guidelines were developed, the church revised and expanded them. The resulting liberalized guidelines have allowed Adventist hospitals a great deal of

freedom in their abortion practices, a freedom that has resulted in a large number of abortions being performed. Although the church has been hesitant to let it be known, at the present it is clearly not, in either policy or practice, limiting its medical institutions to therapeutic abortions.

A difficult question

This brief historical survey confronts us with a difficult question. Should the hospitals which represent the Seventh-day Adventist Church be offering this "service"? Is this really God's will for our medical institutions? Dr Jack Provonsha warned 15 years ago in his paper read to the Abortion Committee in Loma Linda that, " 'Abortion on demand' may have as one of its moral consequences the dehumanization of the society that practices it."[91] Is the same true of a "Church" that permits abortion on demand in its hospitals?

Dr Robert H Dunn has protested since February 1977 that the Interruption of Pregnancy Guidelines teach,

> . . . that man is not a soul from the time of conception but is one later in life and hints at the time of fetal viability or afterward. This is consistent with the classical or pagan view of man which emphasizes rationality as the essence of the soul.[6] This explains the "lesser value" of the fetus in the early stages, which would then tip the balance of the scale in favor of the mother and her supposed needs. This statement above (i.e. paragraph 2 of the Statement of Principles) is not consistent with the statement which says, "Man does not have a soul; man is a soul."[92]

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[6] Reinhold Nieburh's The Nature and Destiny of Man (Charles Scribner's and Sons, 1955), contrasts the classical/pagan view of man with the Biblical view of man. (see pp 5, 6, 12, 13).

Dr Dunn's charge that the Statement of Principles and Guidelines is more consistent with the classical/pagan view of man than the Biblical view of man has serious implications for Seventh-day Adventists. That the debate over whether "man is a soul" or "man has a soul" is more than an academic question is illustrated by the growing medical use of tissue from aborted fetuses. The November 3, 1986 issue of U S News and World Report stated that, "Researchers at dozens of medical laboratories around the world are using cells from aborted human fetuses to develop new therapies for ailments from leukemia to paralysis."[93] Note carefully the reasoning used by a woman quoted in the article who was receiving cells from aborted fetuses to treat her diabetes. She said:

> It's sad to think that the cells that are helping me come from aborted fetuses. . . . But is it really that different from getting organs from a brain-dead person? If you believe the soul goes to heaven, and transcends the body with all its interchangeable parts, then that alters your view.[94] (emphasis mine)

This woman clearly justified her treatment by appealing to the classical/pagan view of man (i.e. the "soul transcends the body"), rather than the Biblical "body-soul unity" view of man. The article goes on to say that, "Many of the scientists using fetal tissue are acutely uncomfortable about it."[95] Why so? Is it perhaps because they sense the slide into the dehumanization of both their profession and our society?

How should the Seventh-day Adventist Church respond to the growing threats to the integrity of its doctrine and practice from the biomedical field? Dr Robert H Dunn in his 1977 paper also protested

that the Statement of Principles and Guidelines was "prepared by an ad hoc Committee of the General Conference . . . and was not the work of a broader, more representative committee."[96] One of the principle presenters at the January 25, 1971 meeting in Loma Linda (who asked not to be named) stated to this writer as recently as November 12, 1986, that the development of the Guidelines, "wasn't taken seriously. . . . The General Conference put together an ad hoc committee to meet the problem" and ended up with "fairly superficial guidelines."[97] Has the time come to open this question up to the wider Church in a conscious effort to seek a Biblical base for both our philosophy and practice?

The wider church has certainly experienced the effects of the present, supposedly neutral, General Conference policy on abortion. The present policy has especially had a negative impact in the area of a ministry of healing to abortion's second victim, the aborted woman. Who cares for the women in our churches, scarred by abortion with no one to turn to? What healing resources do we as a denomination offer them?

How many Adventists are aware of the fact (the Church press never reported it) that WEBA (Women Exploited by Abortion) was co-founded by a member of the Seventh-day Adventist Church, Mrs Patti McKinney? She founded WEBA to help women, like herself, who are suffering from the consequences of a choice for abortion. Mrs McKinney travelled extensively in the process of establishing WEBA in the USA and six foreign countries. Everywhere she went she found women seeking post-abortion healing. Yet, she reports that when she travelled to Washington, DC to share her mission with the General Conference

Officers, she was told, "Get off your soapbox or get out of the Church."[98]

Another group adversely affected by the present General Conference policy are those SDA medical personnel, including physicians, who believe in the sanctity of human life. The pressures, both overt and covert, brought to bear on them to cooperate and even participate in the open abortion practices of many Adventist hospitals, are real. A former Washington Adventist Hospital chaplain, Ardyce Sweem, remembers that after expressing her concerns to administration over the hospital's abortion practices, she found on her desk the next day an information sheet for job openings in a local Catholic hospital. She reports that, ". . . because of my convictions on this matter, I was even advised to seek employment in a Catholic hospital!"[99] Sweem expressed the conflict of conscience she felt in the Hospital as follows:

> As a former chaplain at Washington Adventist Hospital, I sometimes dealt with women who were either having or considering abortions. . . . it became very painful for me to work in a hospital which did abortions as a "service" to the community. To work in such a hospital became a contradiction in terms--a terrible hypocrisy, especially since we claimed to be a Christian institution. How could we save life on one hand and yet destroy it on the other? Although personally against abortion, I felt as part of the staff that I was implicated. For example, on entering a room in which an abortion was taking place, what could I say to the patient to comfort and support her when I was convicted that what she was doing was morally wrong and yet the hospital which I was a part of was helping her to do? At times the moral conflict was nearly unbearable. I also discovered that partly because of a lack of clear Biblical teaching that many Adventist women were having abortions as well, which I believe is a subtle plot of Satan to destroy many potential

> church members of the next generation. . . .I was convicted that I could not work indefinitely in a hospital which did abortions and would not return to such a situation. . . . I pray that our Adventist hospitals in North American and elsewhere will awaken to this moral issue and be in the forefront of those who seek to protect rather than destroy human life.[100]

We can no longer deny that there is a growing question among Adventists as to whether abortion can continue to be a neutral issue for a Church that claims to "keep the commandments of God and have the faith of Jesus." Perhaps a sign carried by a protester in front of Sligo Seventh-day Adventist Church on October 5, 1985 best summed up the significance of this issue for the Church. It read:

"Adventists--Remember the 6th Commandment too!"

Author's Note

This paper had its beginning in April 1986, when Ministry magazine first asked me to write a history of the Seventh-day Adventist Church's position on abortion. Ministry's plan was to publish this history along with four other articles in an issue devoted to a study of the abortion question. I responded in the affirmative and was immediately confronted with a problem. My request to the General Conference Archives for permission to include in my research the North American Division President's "Abortion File" was denied when it reached the desk of Elder C E Bradford, the President of the North American Division.

In August 1986, Ministry informed me that the "abortion issue" would be published January 1987 and expressed concern over my lack of progress. Ministry's need for an accurate history of the church's position on abortion led Elder J R Spangler to send a letter to Elder C E Bradford requesting permission to use the "Abortion File."

I was informed by Elder J David Newman on September 19, 1986 that permission to research the file had been granted. I began my research on the following Monday, September 22, 1986. After reading through the file, I requested that Archives photocopy nearly one half of the file to enable me to work evenings on the paper.

The following Tuesday, September 30, 1986, Elder Newman called again with the information that Elder Neal C Wilson, General Conference President had closed the file.

I requested a meeting with the editorial staff of Ministry in order to seek counsel. At that meeting the staff reaffirmed their

commitment to publish on the abortion question. I was then asked to explain why the "Abortion File" material was pertinent to the paper. After my explanation, it was agreed that I should use the material in the paper. At the close of the meeting Elder J R Spangler urged me to write an accurate history on the subject and to leave permission for publication up to him.

I completed a rough draft of the paper in November 1986 but it wasn't until February 1987 that I delivered it to Ministry and the editing process began. In the meantime, Ministry moved the date for their "abortion issue" several times finally deciding on August, 1987.

The week before the issue was to go to press, I called Ministry and was told that the General Conference President had "suggested" that this was not a good time to deal with the abortion question. After discussion the Ministry staff decided to cancel the "abortion issue."

It was September 1987 when I was told that the other papers written for August 1987 would be run in later issues but that Ministry would never publish my paper. I was also told that since I had received no remuneration for my work the paper belonged to me.

I find encouragement in the old Russian proverb,

"One word of truth,
outweighs the whole world."

G.B.G.
2/21/88

APPENDIX

1970 Abortion Guidelines

"It is believed that therapeutic abortions may be performed for the following established indications:

"1. When continuation of pregnancy may threaten the life of the woman or seriously impair her health.

"2. When continuation of the pregnancy is likely to result in the birth of a child with grave physical deformities or mental retardation.

"3. When conception has occurred as a result of rape or incest.

"When indicated therapeutic abortions are done, they should be performed during the first trimester of pregnancy."

1971 Interruption of Pregnancy Guidelines

"1. When continuation of the pregnancy may threaten the life of the woman or impair her health.

"2. When continuation of the pregnancy is likely to result in the birth of a child with physical deformities or mental retardation.

"3. When conception has occurred as a result of rape or incest.

"4. When the case involves an unwed child under 15 years of age.

"5. When for some reason the requirements of functional human life demand the sacrifice of the lesser potential human value.

"When indicated interruptions of pregnancy are done, they should be performed as early as possible, preferably during the first trimester of pregnancy."

The 1971 guidelines differ from the 1970 version in both the

wording of the indications that they have in common and in the addition of other indications. The first and second indications of the 1970 guidelines were loosened by the removal of the words seriously and grave. And a fourth and fifth indication were added.

When it was first written, the fifth indication read, "When, in harmony with the statement of principles above, the requirements of functional human life demand the sacrifice of the lesser potential human value." Later it was revised to its current reading. A letter Elder W R Beach wrote to Elder N C Wilson (March 8, 1971) suggests the intention of this indication. It would "cover less definitive reasons for any interruptions of pregnancy."

Both guidelines say that no person should be compelled to undergo nor physician forced to participate in an abortion if he or she has a religious or ethical objection to it. The 1971 guidelines broadens this to include nurses and attendant personnel.

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2. Sermon by Barry E Wood, pastor, Solid Rock Church, Eleanor Roosevelt High School, Greenbelt, MD, January 20, 1985.

3. Ibid.

4. Adventist Review, September 1, 1983, p. 14 (854).

5. Kristin Luker, Abortion & the Politics of Motherhood (Berkeley & Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1984), p. 18.

6. Ibid., p. 20.

7. Curt Young, The Least of These (Chicago: Moody Press, 1983), p. 11.

8. Ibid., p. 12.

9. James C Mohr, Abortion in America, the Origins and Evolution of National Policy, 1800-1900 (New York: Oxford U., 1978) p. 157.

10. Ibid., p. 147.

11. Kristin Luker, op. cit., p. 14.

12. John Todd, Advent Review and Sabbath Herald, June 25, 1867, p. 30.

13. Ibid.

14. Ibid.

15. Advent Review and Sabbath Herald, Nov. 30, 1869, p. 184. (Vol. 34, No. 23).

16. White, A Solemn Appeal, (Battle Creek, Michigan: Steam Press, 1870), pp. 100, 101.

17. J H Kellogg, M.D., Man, the Masterpiece. Modern Medicine Publishing Company, Battle Creek, Michigan; Illinois; New York City. 1894. pp. 423-425.

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19. The Ministry, March 1971, p. 3 [99].

20. E G White, The Ministry of Healing, p. 397.

21. E G White, Patriarchs and Prophets, p. 516.

22. Kristin Luker, op. cit., p. 40.

23. Dietrich Bonhoeffer, Ethics, (New York: Macmillan Publishing Company, Inc., 1955), pp. 175, 176.

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25. James J Londis, Abortion: Mercy or Murder? (Nashville: Southern Publishing Association, 1980), p. 10.

26. Conversation with Marvin C Midkiff, October 22, 1986.

27. Marvin C Midkiff, Speech to Kailua Rotary Club, Jan/Feb (?), 1970.

28. Conversation with Marvin C Midkiff, October 22, 1986.

29. Marvin C Midkiff, Speech to Kailua Rotary Club, Jan/Feb (?), 1970.

30. Religious News Service, March 17, 1970, pp. 16, 17.

31. Ibid., p. 17.

32. Conversation with Marvin C Midkiff, October 22, 1986.

33. R R Bietz, GC vice-president, to W J Blacker, president of the Pacific Union, July 8, 1970.

34. Ibid., p. 3.

35. Gen Conf Officers Meeting, July 6, 1970, p. 70-330.

36. Abortion Problems Committee, minutes, September 25, 1970.

37. Ibid.

38. Raymond deHay, MD, chief of staff, to A G Streifling, chairman of Board of Trustees, Dec 13, 1970.

39. Raymond deHay, MD, chief of staff, to R H Pierson, GC president, Dec 16, 1970.

40. Ibid.

41. R H Pierson, GE pres, to R deHay, MD, chief of staff, Jan 5, 1971.

42. Ibid.

43. Ibid.

44. Arthur H Roth to N C Wilson, Jan 5, 1971.

45. G C Officers Meeting, Jan 6, 1971, p. 71-7.

46. James E Anderson, MD to Neal C Wilson, Jan 21, 1971.

47. W R Beach, chairman, to Abortion Committee, Jan 11, 1971.

48. Minutes of GC Committee on Abortions, Jan 25, 1971.

49. Ibid.

50. Jack Provonsha, MD, "An Adventist Position Regarding the Abortion Problem," pp. 10, 11.

51. W R Beach to N C Wilson, Mar 8, 1971.

52. Ibid.

53. Ibid.

54. W J Blacker to N C Wilson, March 30, 1971.

55. W R Beach to N C Wilson, May 11, 1971.

56. Ibid.

57. Gen Conf Officers Meeting, June 14, 1971, p. 71-218.

58. W J Blacker to N C Wilson, June 14, 1971.

59. N C Wilson to W J Blacker, July 13, 1971.

60. C E Bradford, Aug 10, 1971.

61. Ibid.

62. Conversation with Marvin C Midkiff, Oct 22, 1986.

63. R R Bietz, op. cit., p. 2.

64. Ibid., p. 3.

65. Gen Conf Officers Meeting, July 6, 1970, p. 70-330.

66. W R Beach, The Ministry, March, 1971, p. 6 [102].

67. R F Waddell, The Ministry, March, 1971, p. 9 [105].

68. Ibid.

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70. R E Osborn to W R Beach, March 2, 1971.

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75. Ibid.

76. Ibid.

77. Miriam Wood, Adventist Review, September 12, 1985, p. 21.

78. Ibid.

79. Ibid.

80. Adventist Review, February 13, 1986, p. 15 [183].

81. Ibid.

82. Ibid.

83. Ardyce Sweem to Adventist Review, Feb 21, 1986 and Mar 12, 1986. George and Leanne Gainer to Adventist Review, May 15, 1986.

84. Marvin C Midkiff to Bert Haloviak, October 20, 1986.

85. Ronald D Marx to Mr and Mrs George Gainer, April 19, 1985.

86. American Hospital Association Guide to the Health Care Field, 1986.

87. Ronald D Marx to Mr and Mrs George Gainer, April 19, 1985.

88. The Washington Post, October 5, 1985.

89. Conversation with Nurse "Y", Potomac Conference Campmeeting, 1985.

90. Washington Adventist Hospital--Abortions document.

91. J W Provonsha, "An Adventist Position Regarding the Abortion Problem, p. 10.

92. Robert H Dunn, MD, MPH, "The Nature of Man in the Early Stages of Life and Our Responsibility", p. 3.

93. U S News and World Report, November 3, 1986, p. 68.

94. Ibid., pp 68, 69.

95. Ibid., p. 69.

96. Robert H Dunn, MD, MPH, "The Nature of Man in the Early Stages of Life and Our Responsibility", p. 3.

97. Conversation on November 12, 1986 with participant at the Loma Linda meeting on January 25, 1971.

98. Speech by Patti McKinney at Sligo SDA Church. Seminar--"Adventism & Abortion: A Second Look", April 24, 25, 1987.

99. Ardyce Sweem's April 16, 1987 letter to Seminar--"Adventism & Abortion: A Second Look".

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